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BRIEF MEMOIR

OF

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ.

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RE-PRINTED, WITH ADDITIONS, FROM THE NORFOLK NEWS,  
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W. PIERCE & MONJY

8, LANE

Yours sincerely
J. J. Purney

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APR 22 1870

BRIEF MEMOIR

OF

✓
JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ.,

BY

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JOHN ALEXANDER,

MINISTER OF PRINCE'S STREET CHAPEL, NORWICH.

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THE TENTH THOUSAND.  
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NORWICH :

JOSIAH FLETCHER, UPPER HAYMARKET ;

LONDON : CHARLES GILPIN.

1847.

BRIEF MEMOIR.

FOR nearly two centuries, the house of Gurney has possessed such an influence in the city of Norwich, that none of its members could have passed away entirely unfelt and unnoticed. But no one has exercised that influence more powerfully and beneficially, than the honoured individual, whose recent death has occasioned such universal lamentation.

Joseph John Gurney, the third son of John and Catherine Gurney, the sister of Priscilla Wakefield, was born in Earlham hall, on the 2nd of August, 1788. A person of the same name as his father, one of his ancestors, and a member of the Society of Friends, appears from the record of "The sufferings of the People called Quakers," to have been a prisoner, with several others, in Norwich gaol, in the year 1683, for refusing to take an oath; and it is a remarkable fact, that the Waller Bacon, of

Earlham, who committed him, was at that time, resident in the very hall which the descendants of the persecuted prisoner now occupy. The father of our lamented friend, an extensive dealer in hand-spun yarn, became subsequently a partner in the banking business, which had been established in Pitt street, in 1775, and was afterwards brought to the present building. He was a man of peculiarly active mind and habits; public spirited and benevolent; and his house at Earlham, to which he removed from Brammerton, in 1786, was the scene of sumptuous hospitality. The superintendence and care of a family of eleven children devolved, however, almost entirely upon his wife, who was a woman of varied and superior excellencies; possessing an enlarged and well cultivated mind, with a refined taste, and high toned conscientiousness. As she died in 1792, her son Joseph was soon deprived of maternal care, and his yet infant years were committed to the intelligent and affectionate training of his three elder sisters; one of whom, who still survives, supplied, as far as a sister could supply, a mother's place; and another of whom, the late Mrs. Fry, had probably no small degree of influence in inspiring his mind with those prin-

ciples, which she herself afterwards so nobly carried out into beneficent practice. During the earlier years of this interesting family, true religion had not the controlling and sanctifying power over their minds which it had subsequently. They had not yet perceived the "vanity," nor experienced the "vexations" of the world; their path was sunshine, and their atmosphere perfume; and their literary tastes, their elegant accomplishments, and the rich hospitality of "the good man of the house," rendered Earlham hall the attractive centre, in the midst of an extensive circle, to which gentry and nobility repaired, and where the late Duke of Gloucester was a welcome and a delighted visitor.

When the education of our lamented friend ceased to be conducted at home, it was intrusted to the Rev. J. H. Browne, a clergyman in Hingham, about twelve miles from Earlham; and it was subsequently matured at Oxford, where he had an excellent private tutor, in the Rev. John Rogers, a man of great and varied learning; and where he attended the lectures of the professors, and enjoyed many of the valuable privileges of the University, without becoming a member of it, and without subscri-

bing to the Thirty-nine Articles. He had always a strong desire for knowledge, and great promptness and facility both in its acquisition and impartation; and his classical, mathematical, and general attainments, if they did not entitle him to the rank of first-rate scholarship, were highly respectable. He had an extensive acquaintance with the Hebrew and Syriac languages, as well as with classics, mathematics, and general science. Attached, even in early life, to Biblical studies, he had critically read the Old and New Testaments in the original languages, in the Syriac Peschito, and in the Latin Vulgate, before he was twenty-two years of age; and he was well acquainted with Rabbinical and Patristic writings, which are often referred to in the learned and skilful criticisms, which abound in his "Biblical Notes and Dissertations." The acquisition of languages, especially of the Greek and Latin, though a laborious process, is among the essential branches of school education; and the intellectual tastes by which Mr. Gurney was distinguished in after life, as well as the perspicuity and elegant ease, which characterised his writings and his public speaking, were in no small degree the effect and the evidence of the atten-

tion which he had paid to classical studies. He also earnestly recommended them to others; and in his ‘Thoughts on Habit and Discipline,’ there is a chapter on Good Habits of Intellect, in which he says, “I cannot entirely agree in the opinions of those persons who complain of the hours in each passing day, which are devoted, in most of our schools, to Latin and Greek. True indeed it is, that a number of modern languages, and various branches of philosophy and science, appear at first sight to possess superior claims in point of utility; but I believe that no man, who has imbibed at school an accurate knowledge of Latin and Greek, will regret the hours which have been devoted to the pursuit. Not only will he find the polish of classical literature a real advantage, and its treasures worth enjoying; not only will his acquaintance with these languages facilitate the acquirement of others; but the habits of study which he has obtained in the pursuit, will have given him a *mastery* over learning, which he will afterwards find it easy to apply to any of its departments.” But, what is best of all, his early studies were not only pursued and perfected in after life, but all the intellectual wealth and power which they

afforded, were consecrated to the advancement of truth and piety in himself and others. Those who have been accustomed to observe his tall, erect, and manly form, and his countenance, which seemed the bright abode of combined intelligence and goodness, may easily conceive what must have been the attractive loveliness of his youth. He was then an object of great admiration and attachment to all his juvenile acquaintance; and when we consider the sweetness of his disposition, his social sympathies, and his bright worldly prospects, we may gratefully acknowledge that his preservation from the power of temptation, was an early and impressive evidence that he was a favoured object of divine care and mercy.

It is not surprising that the clerical tutorship by which he was trained, and that the ecclesiastical attractions of Oxford, should have produced in his mind some questioning respecting the system of Quakerism, and some bias towards the Established Church. This state of hesitation, however, did not long continue. "Although I enjoyed a birthright in the Society," says he, in his 'Observations on the Religious Peculiarities of the Friends,' "my situation, after I had arrived at years of dis-

cretion, was of that nature which rendered it, in rather an unusual degree, incumbent upon me to make my own choice of a particular religious course. Under these circumstances, I was led, partly by research, but chiefly I trust by a better guidance, to a settled preference on my own account of the religious profession of Friends." His entrance on the duties of secular business, was connected with a regular attendance on the Sunday and week day worship in the Meeting house; and the adoption of this important practice, and especially the discourses of a female minister among the Friends, who died only last year, were the means by which the Divine Spirit led him to embrace that gospel which regenerated his youthful heart, and became, throughout his future life, the fruitful source of all his excellencies and usefulness. "I have reason to be thankful," says he, in his 'Thoughts on Habit and Discipline,' "that I was trained from very early years, in the habit of uniting with my friends in public worship, some one morning in the middle part of the week, as well as on the Sabbath day. Thus to break away from the cares and pursuits of business, at a time when the world around us is full of them, I have

found to be peculiarly salutary; and can now acknowledge with truth, that the many hours so spent have formed one of the happiest, as well as the most edifying portions of my life."

It will be peculiarly gratifying to the great and useful body of Sunday-school teachers, to be informed, that some of his early years were consecrated to their important work, chiefly for the purpose of instructing a class of young persons in scriptural religion; and that some men of reputation and usefulness, now in Norwich, were once children in his "first day" school. One of them, the able Editor of the Journal in which this sketch originally appeared, has favoured the writer with a letter on the subject of these Sunday schools, in which he says, "About thirty years since, Mr. Gurney undertook to give Biblical instruction, during the hour which followed the breaking up of the morning meeting held in the Goat Lane, Norwich, to a class of boys and girls, in connection with the congregation of the Society of Friends. This class consisted of children, for the most part of the middle and wealthy classes; and, though there were a few of the poor, all received a secular education elsewhere. The number was I think, never more than

thirty or forty, and generally not more than twenty. Mr. Gurney was assisted solely by a senior sister, long since dead, Priscilla Gurney, also a minister among the Friends—a lady of much gracefulness of person and manner—in all respects a good *third* to her brother and Mrs. Fry. The teaching was rather like what is usual in our present Bible classes. Passages learnt by heart; expositions of capital portions of scripture; and, particularly, deductions of evidence founded on the fulfilment of prophecy—these, with much elaborate proof of the deity of Christ, and of the doctrine of the atonement, formed the substance of it. Altogether, the course was exactly the germ, afterwards developed in the writings of our friend. It was simple, scriptural, and evangelically sound. The school continued, if I remember right, about four years, and was then discontinued, on account of the growth of some of the pupils into man and womanhood, and the removal of others to distant boarding schools, or by death.”

From that time forward, he was an enlightened and zealous advocate and labourer in the cause of popular *education*. The public school, at Ackworth, as well as other schools, belonging to the Society of Friends, received

his attention and support; and he composed, for the use of its pupils, "a plan of scriptural instruction," which embraces a compendious system of scripture history, doctrines, and duties. He was also a warm admirer, and a liberal supporter of the British school system; not only on account of its religious and unsectarian basis, but also on account of its efficient mode of communicating instruction. Many parts of the country, as well as of the city of Norwich can bear witness to the liberality with which he assisted in the erection and maintenance of public schools. One of his latest acts was, to attend the annual examination of the British school in Palace street; and it is now a peculiarly affecting remembrance, that, at the close of the engagement, a map of England and Wales, which some of the boys had drawn out, was presented to him in the name of the school, as a testimony of the respect and gratitude of the children. His affectionate heart was evidently delighted with the gift. He thanked them all most heartily; and, alas! for human plans and foresight, he kindly promised that all the boys should visit Earlham, some fine day in summer, when they might play in the planta-

tion, and walk through the beautiful garden. "In that garden there is now a sepulchre!"

Having, in early life, been brought under the influence of religion, we may suppose that he became desirous to be the means of imparting its instructions and blessings to others: and, therefore, after the usual preliminary proceedings, and after some painful exercises of mind, he became an acknowledged *minister* of the Society of Friends, in the year 1818. By taking this step, he entered upon a more public and important course of labour and usefulness. His ministry, conducted in accordance with the principles and peculiarities of the Friends, was evangelical and influential in a high degree. The gifts of nature, the acquisitions of study, and, above all, the graces of the divine Spirit, eminently qualified him to preach the word, with unction, persuasiveness, and power. His discourses were always well stored with scripture illustrations, arguments, and appeals. They were emphatically Bible sermons. Whatever we might think of his opinions respecting "the perceptible guidance of the Spirit," his preaching was confessedly "in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." The great doctrine by which it was pervaded, was Christ crucified,

as the atonement for sin, and as the only ground of a sinner's justification—the foundation on which he rested his own hope for acceptance with God, as well as the constant and delightful theme of his ministry. He “determined not to know anything among men, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified;” and never did he proclaim this doctrine, without a glow, and an energy, and a full delight, which shewed that he was speaking, not only from his convictions, but also “from the abundance of his heart.” By him too, this doctrine was held and proclaimed, not as an opinion, or as a mere creed, but as an influential sentiment, the belief of which secured the practical holiness, as well as the legal justification of the sinner. While he taught that men are not saved *by* good works, he also taught that they are not saved *without* them; and those who have been in the habit of hearing his discourses, will remember the frequency and the seriousness with which he repeated the Saviour's language, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” On some occasions the public are invited to the Meeting

house in Norwich, where the Friends usually worship; and at such times, when he was the preacher, the topics which he selected, and the faithful, affectionate, and urgent manner in which they were enforced upon his hearers, assured them that whatever *their* opinions and feelings were, *he* regarded the gospel of Christ as a subject of infinite importance, and as worthy of all acceptance. On one of these occasions, when he was about to leave home to engage in some religious service at a distance, the subject of his discourse was the history of the healing of the lame man, by Peter, at the "Beautiful" gate of the Temple; when he considered the miracle, first, as affording an evidence of the truth of Christianity, and, secondly, as affording an emblem of its spiritual power, in restoring and blessing the soul of man. The whole discourse was clear, logically arranged, well adapted to the occasion and to the auditory, and delivered with comparatively few "tremulous tones," and with much holy fervour and impressiveness. He had indeed many of the essential qualifications of an eloquent man, which were strikingly manifested on ordinary, as well as on sacred occasions. The simplicity

of his style, the appropriateness of his illustrations, the telling words which he occasionally introduced, the ease and gracefulness of his manner, and the deep and honest interest which he always manifested in the subject of his address, rendered him a most attractive and persuasive speaker; and whenever he rose on the platform, at our public meetings, every heart throbbed, and every eye sparkled, in anticipation of his speech. How affecting is the thought, that the tongue which pleaded so eloquently and effectively for the gospel of God, and the best interests of man, is now silent in the dust!

His ministry, which rendered him, in some degree, a public character, had probably no little influence in prompting his connection with public and general institutions. It was his habit, however, when travelling for the authorised discharge of that ministry in his own church, to take the opportunity of going into general society, as the advocate and promoter of various religious and philanthropic objects. One of his earliest journeys, in discharge of his ministry—undertaken in 1818, in company with his sister, Mrs. Fry—was also devoted to an investigation of the state of the prisons in Scot-

land and the North of England; the results of which were given to the public, in a volume of well-selected facts, accompanied with wise and benevolent suggestions on the subject of *prison discipline*. A similar journey, to Ireland, was taken by the same parties, in the Spring of 1827, and an account of it was published by Mr. Gurney, in "A report addressed to the Marquis Wellesley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland;" in which he recommends a course of prison discipline, the great objects of which are, "first, to prevent the criminal from growing worse; and, secondly, if possible, to effect in his character a real improvement." Upwards of forty prisons were visited by them, besides the principal lunatic asylums, infirmaries, houses of industry, and other establishments, for the relief of the most wretched part of that ever-afflicted population. This visit was very interesting to him; and, on his return, he related, in his own playful and humourous manner, several anecdotes respecting the salutations with which he was greeted by the warm-hearted Irish, in some of the towns, when he was seen walking arm-in-arm with the priests, in making his visits of mercy; and, also, respecting the influence produced by the inspiring chaunt of Mrs.

Fry's voice, in those religious meetings, at which both priests and people attended—an influence which was felt, indeed, not in Ireland only, nor in England only; for when she was addressing a large company of orphans, on the continent, one of the German princes, who was acting as interpreter, was so wrought upon, by the voice and the sentiment combined, that he cried aloud, "*C'est le don de Dieu*"—"This is the gift of God." The following sentence, which occurs towards the close of his report, though written twenty years ago, is a word in season even now. "Were the poor of Ireland, instead of being reduced by high rents, miserably low wages, uncertain tenure, and want of employment, to a condition of misery and disaffection—and then, in the end, driven off the land in a state of despair—were they, instead of suffering all this oppression, kindly treated, properly employed and remunerated, and encouraged to cultivate small portions of land, at a moderate rent, on their own account, there can be little question, that they would gradually become valuable members of the community, and would be as much bound to their superiors, by the tie of gratitude, as they are now severed from them by ill-will and revenge."

The friend of the prisoner could not be expected to become the enemy of the slave; and the name of Joseph John Gurney will ever be associated with Clarkson, Wilberforce, Buxton, and others, in the noble roll of *abolitionists*. The termination of the abominable slave trade, by the British Parliament, in 1807, left slavery still existing in our colonies, while the slave trade itself was practised by foreign nations. The extension of the cause of abolition, and the emancipation of our own slaves in the West Indies, were, therefore, objects still inviting the wisdom, courage, and self-denial of the friends of freedom and humanity; and the subject of this memoir most cheerfully gave up heart, and soul, and purse, to the effort. Many persons in Norwich well recollect the ardent and laborious exertions which he made in the city and county, to enlist all classes in the glorious contest. Nor was he unsuccessful. In January, 1824, only a short time after his brother-in-law, Fowell Buxton, had brought the subject of colonial slavery before the House of Commons, Mr. Gurney was mainly instrumental in collecting a meeting in the Guildhall, where he delivered a speech, which he afterwards pub-

lished, replete with sound argument, and warm-hearted philanthropy. The public mind in the city had been prepared for that meeting, by a visit paid by Thomas Clarkson, a few days before it was held, whose conversation and addresses most thoroughly established and animated Mr. Gurney's mind on the subject. At a county meeting, held in the Shirehall, in the October of the following year, at which the High Sheriff presided, the eloquence of Lord Suffield, Buxton, and others, united with his own, not only in silencing the objections advanced by Lord Wodehouse, but in obtaining a petition for "the immediate mitigation, and, with as little delay as possible, the final and entire abolition of British Colonial Slavery." And, at another meeting of the inhabitants of Norwich, held in St. Andrew's Hall, a month afterwards, a society for the abolition of slavery was instituted, of which the Revds. Edward Day and John Alexander were associated with himself as secretaries. Before that year closed, he was found advocating the same cause, at a general meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, in Freemasons' Hall, London, at which Wilberforce, Brougham, Buxton, Mackintosh, Denman, and Lushington, were his associates. His

speeches, on these exciting topics, were a fine manifestation of gentlemanly courtesy and Christian forbearance. They admirably combined the "*suaviter in modo*," with the "*fortiter in re*;" and while his indignation burned against the atrocious system itself, he called no fire from heaven upon either the mistaken or the guilty men by whom it was upheld. It was this "speaking the truth in love," as well as his commanding talents and influential circumstances, that qualified him, so completely, for a leader in every worthy cause, in whose judgment and temper all parties could repose with entire confidence. "While it is, undoubtedly, our Christian duty," says he, in his letters on the West Indies, "to avoid the least concession of principle, on the subject of Slavery, the use of harsh epithets and violent language towards the slaveholders, is not only objectionable in itself, but has often an injurious effect in arming them against our arguments, and of thus injuring the progress of our cause. I have, therefore, thought it best to observe, towards them, the terms and usages of Christian courtesy; and I believe there are many of these persons in the United States, who are increasingly disposed to enter upon a fair con-

sideration of the subject." When he was thus labouring in the cause of emancipation, he was in the fulness and maturity of his physical and intellectual powers; and those who were associated with him in the spirit-stirring work, now look back with gratitude on the successful termination of that glorious struggle for human right and liberty, by which eight hundred thousand of our fellow creatures were delivered from the chain, and the scourge, and the sting of slavery.

But when emancipation had been thus gained, and even when the apprentice system had been abandoned, the extinction of slavery, in the British colonies, served to deepen his interest in the slave of other lands. His volume of 'Familiar Letters to Henry Clay, of Kentucky,' describes, from his own observation, the benefits which had followed emancipation in the West Indies; and advocates therefrom, the safety and desirableness of terminating slavery in America. These letters, addressed to an anti-abolitionist, were occasioned by a winter spent in the West Indies, in connection with his visit to America in 1839; and contain much information, written in an attractive style, respecting the scenery, productions, general

society, and religious condition of the various islands; published, says he, "in the hope that the lighter parts of the work may serve to amuse the younger class of my readers, on both sides the Atlantic, and lead them on to the consideration of those graver points, so deeply interesting in the present day, which it is my principal purpose to develop and express." On journies, such as these, to America and the West Indies, his taste and skill in drawing, enabled him, with great facility, to make "pencillings by the way." Two of these appear in his work on the West Indies; and his well-stored portfolio contains many sketches of scenes in nature and art, which, if engraved, would illustrate and embellish many pages of his printed volumes.

The plans suggested and advocated by Sir Fowell Buxton, on behalf of Africa, including the *Niger Expedition*, gained his hearty approbation and his liberal aid; except indeed, "those vile guns" by which it was to be defended in time of need; which were a sore trouble to him, and which made him reflect and hesitate, till he found that he could consistently support the scheme, on the principle, that "the Colonization Society" had no connection with the

armed force, which had been provided entirely by the government, and was entirely under its control. The public meeting held in Norwich for its support, was painfully tumultuous; being attended by a great number of operatives, at that time much exasperated by their own sufferings, and by the inflammatory falsehoods of a violent and wicked leader. Not one of the speakers—not even he, could be heard. He had set his heart on that meeting; he hoped it would tend to lessen the mass of human crime and misery; he had been at great expence as well as labour in preparing for it; but he kept his temper admirably, amidst “the tumult of the people;” and though he no doubt keenly felt the disappointment which their unreasonable opposition occasioned, he meekly said to a friend, “Well there has been a great storm, but it’s a comfort, thou knowest, that we have passed the resolutions.”

It is scarcely possible for a man of intelligence and generous sympathies, to be wholly indifferent to *politics*. Joseph John Gurney, at all events, was not so. By education and conviction, he early became a staunch advocate of civil and religious freedom, and, on many occasions, fearlessly asserted the inalienable

right of man to think for himself. For several years after he had attained to manhood, he took some part in the electoral struggles of Norwich. Electioneering, however, connected, as it then too much was, with party spirit, and corrupt practices, soon became unpalatable to him, and he gradually withdrew from the political arena; not however, until he had made a bold but unsuccessful attempt to abolish, by mutual agreement between the antagonist party leaders, the system of bribery, so long and so shamefully prevalent in Norwich. That he continued to the last, firm in his allegiance to the political principles of his youth, no one will be disposed to question, who remembers his distinct avowal of them at the great Anti-Maynooth meeting, held in St. Andrew's Hall, in 1844; or his manly adhesion to the doctrines of the league, on the occasion of Mr. Cobden's first visit to Norwich; when "Free Trade" was less fashionable than it has since become. In politics, however, as well as in every thing else, he was swayed exclusively by the pure motives of love to his neighbour, and of fidelity to the law of God.

As he was opposed to *capital punishments*, both on principle as a Quaker, and on feeling

as a philanthropist, he took a decided and active part in every effort for their abolition, and anxiously and laboriously interested himself in the case of several criminals in the city, who had been condemned to death. About thirty years ago, he strenuously endeavoured, in connection with the late Lord Suffield, to save the lives of three men in Norwich, who had been condemned for burglary. For two of the men they obtained a reprieve; but Belsham was left for execution, very much on the ground that it was thought necessary to make one example, the calendar of that assize having been peculiarly heavy. In the interesting but unpublished volume of his Lordship's life, written by Richard Mackenzie Bacon, Esq., the following letter from Mr. Gurney, on the subject, is inserted, which, it is hoped, may, without impropriety, be extracted.

“Norwich, 4th month, 10th, 1819.

“DEAR FRIEND—As the awful moment draws nigh, which is destined to translate the afflicted object of our common solicitude, into the enduring scenes of another, and I trust a *better* world, my heart spontaneously and instinctively turns towards *thee*; I must say, not without a lively feeling of affection and regard.

“I spent some little time with poor Belsham yes-

terday afternoon, and, I may acknowledge, I was much comforted by my visit. I was engaged with him in prayer ; how could it be otherwise ? And, though I should be cautious how I ventured to decide on such a question, yet was there that quietness and contrition of spirit about him, which created in me a belief, that God was about to have that mercy upon him, which man had refused. I think I may assert, that he is not one of those desperate persons who have long been deeply practised in crime. From all that I have seen of him, I can readily believe the testimony of the persons among whom he lived, that he is a beginner in crime ; that he was, till lately, a person of honest habits. He wept much, but in the midst of his weeping, he displayed a quietness and a steadiness which will, I believe, go far to disarm death of its terrors. May the holy arm of Omnipotence be near to support him in the moment of deepest trial. May God have mercy upon him, through Jesus Christ.

“I cannot conclude my letter without saying how much I have rejoiced for thy sake, and the sake of many others, in the zeal, energy, judgment, and feeling, which thou hast manifested on the occasion which has so much interested us both. To flatter thee, is certainly very far from my wish, but I must say two things on the subject. The first is, that after what is past, it is impossible not to feel a warm personal interest in thee. The second is, that such a heart and mind, are talents to be employed in thy Master’s service.”

In the case of another man, who was senten-

ced to death for burglary, some circumstances, favourable to the prisoner, came to our friend's knowledge, which as soon as he had ascertained to be correct, he hired a post chaise; travelled all night to London, taking with him the principal witness on the trial; had an interview with the Judge and with the Secretary of State; and happily obtained an order for commutation of punishment, which he brought to Norwich in time to save the poor man's life. It will be recollected that nearly eighteen years ago, John Stratford was found guilty of murder, for sending a bag of poisoned flour to the workhouse, by which one person, though not the person he intended, was destroyed. Some efforts were made on his behalf, but he was ultimately hanged. Mr. Gurney frequently visited him, previously to his execution; and subsequently he published an account of him, in a tract, of which, more than twenty thousand were circulated in the city and neighbourhood. His opposition to capital punishments was almost necessarily connected with a hatred of war of all kinds, and under all circumstances. He was, therefore, a zealous supporter of *The Peace Society*, and took every suitable opportunity of diffusing its principles, both at home and abroad. He also became,

nearly four years ago, a pledged member of *The Temperance Society*; and at one of its public meetings in St. Andrew's Hall, he gave an elaborate address, to shew the physical as well as moral evils which are produced by intoxicating drinks. The butler in his own family, encouraged by his master's example, was also a determined tee-totaller.

Institutions of a more entirely religious character, were, however, the objects in which he took the deepest interest; and of these the *British and Foreign Bible Society* was perhaps his greatest favourite. Its sublime and simple object—the circulation of the Scriptures, without note or comment, throughout the world; its wide embrace of all denominations of Christians as its members; and its blessed influence in saving the souls of men, all fell in with his most fondly cherished sentiments and feelings; and the day of its anniversary meeting in Norwich, was with him always “a high day.” Formerly its evening, and, for some years past, its morning, was spent at Earlham by the committee, in social and religious intercourse, with the deputation and other friends. How delightful it was, on such occasions, to form one in the varied circle, of which he was the

ever bright and hallowed centre. How delightful to meet there eminent and honoured Christians of all ranks and denominations, uniting with his own lovely family, in friendly fellowship, and in domestic worship. How delightful to hear his Scripture readings and expositions, recommending to us that truth and charity, which he so fully and closely combined, and to sympathise with him in those supplications for the church and the world, which he so fervently offered up. "Surely it was none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." Wilberforce, Buxton, Kinghorn, Simeon, Innes, and many others, who once met in fellowship there, are now gone to that world where he is gone, to unite with them in the song of Moses and the Lamb; but there are others who continue unto this day, to carry on for awhile that blessed cause, in which they were faithful even unto death. It was on one of these occasions that he commenced and cemented his personal intimacy with Wilberforce. In the sketch which he has given of that admirable man, he says, "I was introduced to Wilberforce in the autumn of 1816. He was staying with his family by the sea side, at Lowestoft, in Suffolk. I well remember going over from the place of

my own residence, in the neighbourhood of Norwich, partly for the purpose of seeing so great a man, and partly for that of persuading him to join our party, at the time of the approaching anniversaries of the Norfolk Bible and Church Missionary Societies. I was then young; but he bore my intrusion with the utmost kindness and good humour, and I was much delighted with the affability of his manners, as well as with the fluency and brightness of his conversation. Happily he acceded to my solicitations; nor could I hesitate in accepting his only condition—that I should take into my house, not only himself, but his whole family group—consisting of his amiable lady, and several of their children, two clergymen, who acted in the capacity of tutors, his private secretary, servants, &c. We were indeed to be quite full of guests, independently of this accession; but what house would not prove elastic in order to receive the abolisher of the slave trade?" So far back as the year 1811, when the County Auxiliary Bible Society was formed in Norwich, our beloved friend had a place on its platform, which he never deserted till his Master summoned him to heaven. At that meeting, he was associated with the

venerable Bathurst, bishop of the diocese, whose eminent classical attainments, liberal sentiments, and quiet spirit, were regarded with admiration and esteem by his Quaker friend, who was a frequent visitor at the palace, and who, at that meeting, was one of the speakers. During the following thirty years, he attended not only its anniversaries, but its monthly committees, and often visited in its service the neighbouring towns. His pen too, which was always "the pen of a ready writer," was often skilfully used on its behalf, not only in writing its reports, but in vindicating its claims; and his pamphlet on 'Terms of Union' is a masterly defence of some of its versions and translations, and especially of its determination not to demand any doctrinal test, as a qualification for membership. He was also a cheerful and liberal subscriber to its funds; and when about five years ago, he felt unable to devote to it so much time and labour as he had done formerly, he sent a donation of £500, and said in a note to a friend, "one reason for my doing so, is the impossibility of my continuing to give the Bible Society the personal attention, which formerly occupied so much of my time." The last anniversary meet-

ing he attended, was in September, 1846, when he moved one of the resolutions. After he had, in his usual happy manner, expressed his “cordial and unalterable regard to the Society, which was endeavouring to circulate the Bible all the world over,” the scene became sacredly impressive, when his soft complacent eye fixed on his only son, who then stood where he himself, when about the same age, had stood, five and thirty years before, and who in concise and manly terms, avowed his determination to support the institution, which his father, then alas! had been advocating for the last time!

The principles on which he acted, in uniting with the Bible Society, and with religious and benevolent Institutions in general, are so admirably stated in the following paragraph from his ‘Terms of Union,’ that no apology is needed for inserting it entire. “I have often thought that the grounds on which a serious Christian stands in connection with other men, while he prosecutes his various objects in life, may be compared to the successive stories of a *pyramid*. When he is transacting the common business of the day, with men of all characters and conditions, he is surrounded by vast numbers of people, and stands on the broad

basement story. Here, while he abstains from evil things, he is compelled to communicate with many evil persons, and he calls to mind the words of the Lord Jesus, ‘I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.’ But now an hospital is to be built; he mounts to the second story—his ground is narrowed and his company lessens. The utterly selfish and dissolute disappear from his view; but he still finds himself in communication with the worldly as well as the religious; with the infidel as well as with the believer. Christian benevolence, however, has new services in store for him. A society is formed for distributing the Scriptures without note or comment. The object is one of undoubted excellence, and he heartily engages in the cause. Here he stands on the third section of the pyramid. Again the company is diminished; again the circumference is contracted. Yet it is large enough to comprehend all reflecting persons of every class, who value the Bible, and approve of its dissemination. Our Philanthropist knows that the work is pure and good, and though he by no means agrees in sentiment with all who co-operate in it, the last thing he dreams of, is

to narrow the circle either of its friends or of its efficacy."

"But while in distributing the Bible he stands on a common level with all who approve that object, he well knows the importance of a sound interpretation of its contents; and on the next story of the pyramid, he finds himself engaged with rather fewer companions, and within somewhat narrower boundaries, in a Missionary Society, or in a Sabbath-day School, formed for the express purpose of affording to those who need it, *evangelical* instruction. The merely nominal Christian, and the Socinian subscriber to the Bible Society, have now parted from him; yet he is still encompassed by many persons whose religious views, on secondary points, differ from his own. He ascends therefore, when occasion requires it, to an area of still smaller dimensions, and there he joins the members of his own church, in distributing tracts written in defence of the sentiments or practices peculiar to themselves. Finally, he has some solitary duty to perform, or some opinion, all his own, to maintain or to develop; and behold he stands alone on the top of the pyramid!"

The advocacy of these benevolent and religious institutions, was, however, not confined to this country, or to Great Britain. He remembered them, and pleaded for them in the religious visits, which, as a ministering Friend he paid to *America*, and to various parts of Europe. His visit to America was in 1837, and occupied three years; during which time, he travelled through most of the Northern states of the Union, and in Upper and Lower Canada. The various incidents of his journeys; the objects, natural, civil, and moral, which attracted his attention by the way; and the impressions made on his mind by America and the Americans, are all narrated, in good tourist style, in a series of letters "to Amelia Opie," with whose delightful prose and poetry all our readers are familiar. This volume of letters, though printed, and circulated among his private friends, has not been published; but it seems very desirable that not only it, but some deeply interesting manuscripts, should be published for the use of society, which is already so much indebted to his works. It is hoped, however, that there will be no impropriety in giving just one extract from the

volume on America, relating simply to the address which he gave to the congress, in the Senate house, at Washington.

“ The principal object which I now had in view, in visiting Washington, was the holding of a meeting for worship with the officers of government, and members of Congress. My mind was attracted towards these public men, under a feeling of religious interest; and, far beyond my expectation, did my way open for accomplishing the purpose. Colonel Polk, the speaker of the representative assembly, granted me the use of the Legislation hall; the chaplain of the house (a respectable Wesleyan minister) kindly surrendered his accustomed service for our accommodation; public invitation was given in the newspapers; and when we entered the hall the following First-day morning, we found it crowded with the members of Congress, their ladies, and many other persons. The president, and other officers of the government, were also of the company. Undoubtedly it was a highly respectable and intellectual audience; and I need scarcely tell thee, that it was to me a serious and critical occasion. One of my friends sat down with me in the speaker’s rostrum; a feeling of calmness was graciously bestowed upon

us ; and a silent solemnity overspread the whole meeting. After a short time, my own mind became deeply impressed with the words of our blessed Redeemer, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ Speaking from this text, I was led to describe the main features of orthodox christianity ; to declare that these doctrines had been faithfully held by the Society of Friends, from their first rise to the present day ; to dwell on the evidences, both historical and internal, which form the credentials of the gospel, considered as a message to mankind, from the King of heaven and earth ; to urge the claims of that message on the world at large, on America in particular—a country so remarkably blessed by divine providence—and, above all, on her statesmen and legislators ; to advise the devotional duties of the closet, as a guard against the dangers and temptations of politics ; to dwell on the peaceable government of Christ by his Spirit ; and finally, to insist on the perfect law of righteousness, as applying to nations as well as individuals—to the whole of the affairs of men, both private and public. A solemn silence again prevailed at the close of the meeting ; and after it was concluded, we received the warm greetings of Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and

many other members, of whom we took our leave in the flowing of mutual kindness. Thus was I set free from the heavy burden which had been pressing upon me. In the evening, we met a large assembly at the methodist chapel at Georgetown, a populous place, almost adjoining Washington; and the next morning pursued our journey to a small settlement of humble Friends, in the state of Maryland."

What a scene was this! and what a state of religion, as well as of religious liberty and charity, must that country enjoy, which could produce it, and which could witness it with such complacency! Here are the free chosen legislators of one of the largest and most important countries in the world, composing a worshipping congregation in their senate house; their chaplain, a methodist minister, resigning his seat to a Quaker; the Quaker preaching a sermon full of gospel sentiment and exhortation, and urging upon senatorial hearers the importance of private prayer, as a preservative from the temptation of politics, and as a preparative for good legislation; the solemn silence, to afford them an opportunity of "thinking on these things;" Henry Clay, and John Quincy Adams, and others, shaking hands with the Quaker, and

probably thanking him for his sermon; and then the going from legislators and senate halls, to preach in a Methodist Chapel, and the next morning joining a humble settlement of Friends! When will England equal this? "May the Lord hasten it in his time."

We must deny ourselves the gratification of remaining with him any longer in America, or of doing more than glance at his visits to *the Continent*. The first was in 1841, when he went to Paris with Samuel Gurney, his brother in sympathy, as well as in relationship. The principal object of this visit, was to direct the attention of influential and official persons to the subject of slavery, for the purpose of obtaining its extinction. During their stay, they had an interview with Louis Philippe, the king of the French; as well as much communication with M. Guizot, his minister, and with other persons of distinction. His next visit was in the same year, when he was accompanied by Mrs. Fry. As both of them were ministers, their visit, in that capacity, was sanctioned by the society; but they endeavoured to combine with it, as was usual, different, yet accordant, objects of pursuit. They visited Holland, Belgium, Hanover, some of the German states, Denmark, and

Prussia. They held, in various places, religious meetings, not only for worship with the Friends, but also for the instruction and improvement of all classes; and they paid many visits of mercy, to administer the consolations of the gospel to those who were suffering affliction and persecution. They inspected prisons, hospitals, and other public institutions, and then presented their reports to the several governments; always recommending to them, when necessary, the abolition of slavery, and the granting of religious toleration. Thus, after the example of their divine master, they “went about doing good.” Their reception every where, was cordial and joyous. “The common people heard them gladly.” They were admitted to long and familiar interviews with several of the continental sovereigns, who listened to their statements and suggestions with respectful attention. What diplomacy had, in some instances, failed to effect, they were the means of accomplishing; and the King of Holland, who had been in the habit of procuring slave soldiers from the Gold Coast, was induced, by Mr. Gurney’s representations, to abandon the practice. The third visit, which was for similar purposes, took place in 1843; when he was accompanied to Paris by

Mrs. Gurney and Mrs. Fry; and on his sister's return home, he and his wife went into the south of France, where he seized every opportunity of instructing and encouraging members of his own religious society. During this tour he also visited Switzerland; met with Vinet in Lausanne, and with D'Aubigné in Geneva; had an interview with the King of Würtemberg; and held many large meetings for religious purposes. His last continental tour was in the spring of 1844, when, accompanied by Mrs. Gurney and Josiah Forster, he went to Paris, and to several of the principal towns in France. During his progress, he distributed religious books and tracts, visited prisons and philanthropic institutions, held religious meetings, and spoke also at anti-slavery and other meetings, in French; "without difficulty." He had also interviews with Guizot, the Baroness de Stael, the Duc de Broglie, her brother, who reminded him of his own father, "he was so warm-hearted and genial;" and with many other persons of influence and distinction. After "a quiet and comfortable meeting" at Bordeaux, they had a pleasant walk on the fine quay, "though the recollections of blood hang about this part of the Loire. It was the scene of the *Noyards*, i. e. wholesale

murders by drowning, effected by the opening of a trap door by strings from the shore, in the boats, which had been filled with the unhappy aristocrats, their wives, and children. About six thousand people, are said to have been destroyed in this way here, under the orders of Carriere, in 1793—probably the largest horror of the French Revolution.” “In the evening,” says he, “we again repaired to the Casino, as I had given notice, at the close of our meeting for worship, of my intention to tell the people my West Indian story. We found a large and genteel assembly all ready for us, in the greatest order; some four or five hundred people apparently. Nothing could exceed their willing attention. I was enabled to get through the service comfortably, so as to leave a strong impression against slavery, in this notoriously pro-slavery place.”

Who can tell the amount of temporal and spiritual good which may have already resulted, and which may yet result from these visits of mercy, by which both hemispheres have been travelled and blessed! What strength and variety of intellectual and moral power was exercised during these journeys; and how he was enabled to adapt himself suitably to all cir-

cumstances, and to all persons, whether he was visiting the prison or the palace; and whether he was preaching in the great congregation, or standing before Kings, and teaching senators wisdom! What multitudinous works of faith, and labours of love he pursued; not becoming faint and weary in well doing, but ever renewing his strength with his toil; not sinking down into despondency, but deriving courage from adverse circumstances; and ever rising like the eagle, aiming at the sun, "with an eye that never winks, and a wing that never tires!" What love to God, and what love to man, must have mingled in his heart, and glowed there continually, as the never failing and ever inspiring spring of all that he was, and of all that he did! And what works have yet to follow him into that world, where saved, not by works, but by faith and grace, he now rests from his labours, finds his home and his heaven in God, and enjoys a happiness as large as his desires, and as lasting as his immortality!

Hitherto it has been comparatively an easy task to detail and delineate these various services in the cause of humanity and religion; but, for obvious reasons, it will not be expected

that we should be able to give any adequate estimate of the *pecuniary support* which he afforded to public institutions, and to private necessities. It may indeed be said, that recently, for instance, he gave £500 to the Bible Society; £500 to the British and Foreign School Society; £500 to the British School in Palace Street; £500 to the Blind Asylum; £500 to the present distress in Ireland; £100 three or four times over, to the Soup Society; and similar sums to the District Visiting Society, and to the Coal Society. But who can tell the sums which he gave, formerly as well as latterly, to numerous public institutions, and to numerous private individuals, at home and abroad? And who can tell the number and amount of his annual subscriptions, to almost every society in this city, and in the country, which he could conscientiously support? But though these things cannot be ascertained, yet we know the principles by which his giving was regulated. "Economy," says he, in his 'Thoughts on Habit,' "dictates the laying by of such a proportion of our revenue, as our circumstances justly demand; it also requires such a care and prudence—such true and well principled order, in our personal or family

expenditure, as will leave a generous surplus to meet the calls of benevolence, in the promotion of both the temporal and spiritual need of our fellow men. He is a good economist, in a pecuniary point of view, who *saves* sufficiently; *spends* prudently; and *gives* with judgment, generosity, and effect. It is, in fact, of the utmost importance to the moral welfare of our young people, whose worldly circumstances are prosperous, that they should be led to form *the habit* of giving easily, liberally, and yet wisely." Not only did he act on the admirable principles which he thus so clearly states, but he evidently considered that giving money to proper objects, and in suitable proportions, is a religious duty which he was bound to practise; that he was not the absolute proprietor of his possessions, but merely the trustee of them, under God; and that he was to use them, and all his other talents, according to the Divine directions, and in anticipation of the summons, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be steward no longer." But while he thus gave from principle, and as a religious duty, he did not give grudgingly. He was "a cheerful giver, such as the Lord loveth." He knew well from his own experience, that "it is more blessed

to give than to receive;" and probably there was not, in all the world, a man more really happy than he was in the exercise of his personal faculties, and in the use of his various possessions. This personal happiness, however, so far as it was derived from the comforts of life, which he so abundantly enjoyed, was always connected with a keen and practical sympathy with the sufferers of want and hardship; and especially with those, who, through much tribulation, were entering the kingdom of heaven. A poor, blind, and aged Christian, who had occasion one day, to be at the Hall, when kindly spoken to by our friend about his infirmities and privations, replied, "To be sure I have not much of this world's good, and my sight is nearly gone, but I have food to eat, and clothes to wear; and then, I am heir to a kingdom, prepared for me by Christ; think of that." This contented and joyful language of the good old man, greatly affected him, and he said to one of his sisters, "What is all the wealth and glory of the world, compared with the good hope of this poor man, that it is 'his Father's good pleasure to give him the kingdom!'" The sufferings of the poor, in this country especially, were, it is well known, a

subject of much thought and anxiety to him. His own abundance perpetually reminded him not only of the divine goodness to himself, but of the necessities and sorrows of others. There was much in such a state of society, that was perplexing to him, and he often said, "Surely there is a radical error somewhere; this state of things is most unnatural; here are people starving in the midst of abundance; what can be done to remedy the evil?" These reflections which led to considerations on political economy, on the general frame work of society, and on the mysterious permissions of divine providence, did not terminate however in mere speculation or opinion; but they prompted him to do what he could personally, to alleviate the calamities which he deplored. We all know well, how ready he always was, with time, and effort, and money, when the claims of want and suffering were presented. The last public meeting he ever attended, had been summoned by the District Visiting Society, in accordance with his own suggestion, to make some additional provision for the poor, during the severities of winter. The venerable Bishop, who loved to honour his Christian character, and who cordially sympathized with his liberal spirit, moved the

Resolutions, which Mr. Gurney seconded; and a handsome subscription was the result. It was in going home from that meeting, that his horse fell, and he received his mortal injury. But he had finished the work which his Master had given him to do, and then the Master said, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Though it will not be expected, that in this brief sketch, any extensive analysis of his writings should be given, yet we must not entirely omit to notice him as *an author*. Some of his publications have already been referred to. His "Observations on the Distinguishing Views and Practices of the Society of Friends," first published in 1824, has passed through seven editions; and while it is "intended not so much for the information of the public in general, as for the use of the junior members of the society," it is a source of authentic information, relative to the religious views of the body, to which general readers may confidently refer, in order to ascertain the principles and peculiarities of the Friends, and to form a judgment respecting them. His "Essays on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Practical Operation of Christianity," is a body

of sound divinity, written for the use of the church at large, and from which Christians of every denomination may derive instruction and improvement. While it contains a perspicuous statement of the doctrines of Christianity, it presents its internal and external evidences of truth, in a clear and forcible manner, and points out the practical influence which it is intended and adapted to produce. The arrangement of the whole, is exceedingly lucid and logical; and no one can thoughtfully peruse it, without great advantage to his head and his heart. The work has been well appreciated by the public. It has been translated into the German and Spanish languages; and, together with his other works, has been printed in America. These two works, the "Observations" and the "Essays," may be considered as comprising his theology; the former, shewing wherein he differed from others; and the latter, shewing wherein he agreed. It need not be said, that the points of agreement comprise all that is vital and essential in Christianity. The "Biblical Notes and Dissertations," are chiefly critical and philological examinations of several passages of scripture, relative to the deity and incarnation of Christ; and discover a surprising degree of

acquaintance with Hebrew and Rabbinical literature, as well as a *con amore* sympathy with the investigation which he pursues. His "Hints on the Portable Evidence of Christianity," is a book, the title and subject of which was suggested to him in a conversation with Dr. Chalmers, and the treatise itself is an argument in proof of the truth and excellency of Christianity, derived from the accordance of its descriptions of mankind with human experience, and of its peculiar doctrines with man's necessities as a sinner. This evidence he calls portable, because both the Bible itself and personal experience, are things which every man can carry about with him. His "Thoughts on Habit and Discipline" is a book which every person, and which especially every young person should most carefully "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." It relates principally to self-government—a subject little understood, and less practised; but of immense importance to intellectual and religious character, cultivation, and usefulness. His "Essay on the Habitual Exercise of Love to God, considered as a preparation for Heaven," may be regarded as a chapter of the former book; and the charm

conveyed by its very title, is sustained and strengthened through the whole of the holy and heavenly treatise. All honour to the memory of the man who could write and live such a book as that. His "Puseyism Traced to its Root," not only contains his objections, as a Friend, to a Christian ministry receiving pecuniary support either from endowments or from congregations; but exhibits a view of Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregational polity, which all the parties concerned should seriously ponder. But we must not proceed with this analysis. His other works contain treatises "On the Observance of the Sabbath;" "The Right Application of Knowledge;" "The Accordance of Geology with Natural and Revealed Religion;" and on many other subjects, all of which declare a mind sacredly imbued with the spirit of wisdom and piety, and strongly desirous to instruct and bless mankind.

While those persons who are not Quakers, will, of course, object against many of his "peculiarities," all who are christians will harmonise with his statements of the great doctrines of the gospel, and with the spirit of holy piety which pervades his writings. It seems, from some of his expressions, as if he thought that the body

to which he belonged, had always been as orthodox as himself, and that both Fox and Barclay were, in the main, sound expositors of Bible truth. There are probably some persons in the Society, as well as out of it, who think differently. But if his orthodoxy be suspected by any who compare him with the early Friends, it will be confirmed by those who compare him with the earlier Apostles. Perhaps all parties will unite, in thinking that his writings have had no small degree of influence in instructing and establishing the minds of the Friends in sound evangelical truth, and in elevating the body to its present improved condition in the christian church. During the crisis through which it has recently passed, several secessions have indeed taken place, in this country, by which other denominations have been enriched with some of the excellent of the earth; but many such, no doubt, remain; and amidst both secession and controversy, the subject of this Memoir held fast by his "peculiarities," which he always thought of sufficient importance to require his adherence to Quakerism as it then was, and his continued membership with the religious body, of which he had long been the advocate and the ornament. Whether this de-

termination was the best that he could have adopted, will be questioned by many who are not members of his Ecclesiastical Society; whether this determination was regulated by a desire to serve God, in accordance with conscience and with Scripture, will be questioned by no one, either in the Society or out of it, who is acquainted with his character. The testimony which was so unanimously and affectionately borne to him, at his funeral, by so many distinguished and influential ministers of his own denomination, afforded satisfactory evidence that, to no inconsiderable extent, the body to which he belonged harmonised with his sentiments, and that evangelical religion was prevailing among its members. The writer of this Memoir, though he has never belonged to the denomination, and though, as a Congregationalist, he differs materially from its peculiarities, nevertheless cordially rejoices, with all the friends of humanity and religion, that in Great Britain, and in America, there are so many in this "tribe of Israel," who are steadfast adherents to gospel doctrine, to the great principles of civil and religious liberty, and to various institutions, which are established to secure the purity and peace of the world.

It must not be forgotten, that the man who was thus occupied from day to day, and from year to year, in living and labouring for others, was, during a considerable part of his life, engaged in secular business, in one of the most extensive banking establishments in the kingdom. During this long and laborious period, he was also writing the preceding works, and in addition to his Letters on America, and to several pamphlets printed for private circulation, he sent forth no less than twenty separate publications, some of which are large volumes, and on subjects which required much thought, and research, and learning; and yet all of them were composed with great care, both as to the style and sentiment. How then was he able to fulfil these various and multitudinous engagements? Partly because he was a man of orderly and industrious habits, and a great economist in time. Every day was well packed up; and hours and seasons were set apart for leisure and relaxation, as well as for employment and labour. By these means he could attend the bank, speak at a public meeting, write an essay, and take a long and laborious journey; and he could also be the companion of his beloved family; walk in his fragrant gardens; admire, with intelligent

taste, the varieties of nature; or go and describe to the children in a school, the wonderful structure of the human eye. While he thus performed the labours of life, he enjoyed its comforts; what was great, was well attended to; what was small, was not neglected; he was as domestic as he was public; he seemed to have time and place for everything, except idleness; he was most thoroughly a man, as well as a christian, and could consistently say with the apostle, “the life I live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God.” “For my own part,” says he in his “Winter in the West Indies, “I consider it to be greatly to our advantage, while we are engaged in the pursuit of serious and interesting objects, to catch the passing recreation afforded us by birds, flowers, blue skies, and bright sunsets.” In this respect, as well as in most others, he affords a fine model for the imitation of young persons. They may learn from him the art of living well, and of living long; for as the length of life is to be calculated by the man, as well as by the clock, by what is done in the day, as well as by the day itself, we all have the means of equalling the years of Methuselah, in these times of easily accessible knowledge and of stirring activity.

But the excellency of his example was his piety. He never could have been what he was, on any other principles than those of the gospel of Christ. He was a conscientious and a holy man, in whose estimation, idleness, negligence, and unprofitableness, were sins against God, which every man should scrupulously avoid and deprecate. His religion was not in one part of his mind and the world in another, "as the manner of some is;" but it was a principle which pervaded his whole soul, and by which his conduct and conversation were regulated. He was evangelically, spiritually, and practically religious; and those persons who never heard his speeches or his sermons, might at any time have read them, for they were written in his life. There can be no character acceptable to God, but that which is derived from the gospel of Christ, and we can have no personal interest in the gospel unless it be received by faith. This was the doctrine and religion of our departed friend. In himself a sinner, guilty and condemned, he obtained justification and holiness from the precious blood of Christ, and from the regenerating power of the holy Spirit. All the graces by which he was adorned, had been shed on him abundantly by the hand of Christ; and we

should be wrong by denying either the servant's degree of conformity to his Master, or the Master's power and grace, by which that conformity was produced. How rich and glorious is that saving mercy, which, from our depraved and ruined nature, can raise up a spiritual and perfect man in Christ Jesus; and, even in this world of sin and death, can prepare him for that heaven, where his knowledge, and holiness, and joy, shall increase for ever !

Those who have been accustomed to associate with him in public life, will readily believe that he was well qualified to enjoy, and to diffuse *domestic happiness*. A man is, in reality, what he is found to be in his own house. In other places, and in other society, he may act artificially, and under the influence of restraint; but at home he is free and genuine, and his own wife and children are sure to be well acquainted with his real temper and character. And he too, who combines in himself the relations of husband, father, and master, must be very powerful for good or for evil in his own house, and for making those around him happy or miserable. The verdict of Mr. Gurney's domestic jury, was always in accordance with the esteem with which he was regarded by the

public. He had perhaps more of both the internal and the external sources of domestic influence and happiness, than falls to the lot of many. With an ability to acquire, and a disposition to use and to relish, the comforts and elegancies of life, he had much simplicity as well as refinement in his tastes, and his "moderation was known unto all men." His intellectual powers were nicely balanced by his social and benevolent affections. He could be at home in his study, communing with philosophers, and in his drawing room, conversing on ordinary topics, or playing with a child. The bow which he manfully bent, he could gracefully unstring; and when visitors had the privilege of associating with his family, he often manifested remarkable tact in leading general conversation into an agreeable and useful direction. In an unpublished letter, addressed by him to a noble and influential friend, on political and electioneering business, he says, "I am going to perform the office of a true friend, and to find a little fault with thee. Thy heart is remarkably set upon a variety of benevolent objects, and I can truly say, '*Euge frater, i, secundis afflatus zephyris;*' but it appeared to me, (and I have heard it remarked by others,)

that thou art too much in the habit of making these matters the subject of *much conversation*. Thou wilt perhaps think me heretical, but it does not suit my notions about these things, that they should much intrude themselves into the intercourse of private life. I would not entirely exclude them; but I feel this, that those things are our *business*, our *labour*; and that the intellectual and social intercourse between friends, is our recreation, our refreshment, our *play*. I very often have to communicate with others on these subjects; and when this is the case, I endeavour to take a suitable opportunity of saying ‘my say,’ rather as a matter of business and duty, than any thing else; and the ‘say,’ if necessary, can be repeated, and then there is probably an end of it. I do not find it answer with others, nor do I like it myself, to make these things very prominently the subjects of what may be called social intercourse. I know not whether thou wilt quite understand me, for I find it difficult to express my meaning clearly; but I am confident thou wilt bear with me, and we can talk more about it when we meet.” In perfect accordance with this nice sense of what is suitable and edifying in domestic

and social intercourse, the numerous and varied guests which surrounded his table, after the public meeting of the Bible Society, or of some other Institution, were either induced to say or privileged to hear something, at his suggestion, which was acceptable and useful. He seemed, on such occasions, to diffuse himself throughout the room, and to make you feel as much at home as he was, and as happy too. “I think he has a great love of approbation,” said a friend, in reference to his character. “I think he has a great approbation of love,” was the suitable reply. And most assuredly he had a due degree of both; for, while he desired to have the approbation of the wise and good, he always deserved it, because of the universal charity which he diffused. “Those who are the fittest for heaven,” it has been said, “are the best prepared for the enjoyment of earth;” and it is very remarkable that our beloved friend’s attachment to the sources of his personal and domestic happiness, seemed to increase as he advanced in spiritual mindedness, and as he approached the celestial world. During the last months of his earthly sojourn, he often referred, with peculiar emphasis, to the goodness of God in supplying him so liberally with temporal blessings, and

especially with the endearments and enjoyments of home. His spacious mansion ; his select and extensive library ; his comfortable and well furnished rooms ; his beautiful and fragrant gardens ; his lovely and beloved family ; all the arrangements, and associations, and sympathies of his own " sweet home," filled his heart with grateful, joyful love to God ; and on a recent occasion, when walking in his garden, and admiring its beauties, as reminding him of the paradise lost by sin, and of the yet brighter paradise in which Christ has planted the tree of life, he exclaimed *impromptu*,

" From paradise to paradise my upward course extends,
My paradise of flowers on earth in heaven's elysium ends."

It did not accord, however, with the will or with the wisdom of our Heavenly Father, that one of his children, so richly gifted and honoured, should pass through life without the discipline of tribulation—"for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." In addition to the losses which he sustained in the death of his parents ; of brothers and sisters ; of his beloved Buxton, to whom he had said, "from our very early years, we have been bound together in the ties of friendship and brotherhood ;" and by the death

of many others; his own habitation had twice become "the house of mourning." His first wife, Jane Birkbeck, died in 1822: his second wife, Mary Fowler, died in 1836: his third wife, Eliza P. Kirkbride, still survives, to cherish his beloved memory, and submissively to lament her loss. Thus over all "the glory," derived from rich intellectual and spiritual endowments, abundant wealth, great labours and usefulness, and the praise of all the churches, there was "the defence" of dark tribulation; which mercifully prevented the glory from either utterly destroying, or unduly dazzling. How wise, paternal, and sovereign is the government under which we are placed: how much we owe to the painful, yet profitable discipline of affliction; and when, in eternity, we look back upon time, what reason shall we have to say, "He hath done all things well!"

Such a review of life has, no doubt, begun to be taken by our departed friend; and, probably, he now derives, even from the circumstance of his rapid removal from earthly scenes, unspeakable gratitude and joy. After an accidental fall with his horse, which did not appear to injure him at the time, but which was the means of stirring up a latent disease, and after an

illness of only one short week, during the greater part of which no danger was apprehended, he fell asleep in Jesus. 'The very manner of his removal was, however, a manifestation of his heavenly Father's mercy. Possessing, in some degree of strength, a physical fear of death; afraid of dying, rather than of being dead, "he was heard in that he feared," and received "the bliss" without "the pain" of dying. "He had walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." But though the event of death may have been sudden and unexpected to himself, it was not so to his Lord and Master. He who intended so to close his life, had been previously preparing him for the dispensation. There were, probably, not many dying declarations for the hand of Christian friendship to record; but if so, it is well, for we are the more thrown upon the language of his life. Still, how evident it now is, that, for some days previously, he was gathering up his mantle, and approaching nearer to the cross, that he might fall at the Saviour's feet. Those who had the opportunity of observing him, especially during the few months preceding his decease, now clearly perceive, that many things which he then said and did, indicated a state of mind

the most desirable to be possessed, in the near approach of death and heaven. What an instructive and wondrous commentary does the future often write upon present scenes and circumstances, which are now, perhaps, but little noticed, or but imperfectly understood! How we thus get to know hereafter, what we know not now! And when we reach the heavenly temple, and “enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,” where the “Urim and Thummim” always beam with light and perfection, how correctly we shall be able to interpret all the incidents of earth, and how clearly we shall see in them all, the tender love and the marvellous wisdom of our heavenly Father, who is “now leading us, by a right way, to that city of habitation!” How beautifully, too, the close of our friend’s life was in harmony with its course. His last speech besought his fellow citizens to remember the poor. His last sermon was full of evangelical doctrine, and pathos, and admonition. His last public prayer was a devout entreaty that he, and all around him, might be ready for the coming of their Lord. “And so, having served his generation according to the will of God, he fell asleep, and was gathered to his fathers.”

The extraordinary scene presented by our city, subsequently to his death, and on the day of his funeral, cannot be better described than in the following language of my esteemed friend, the editor of the *Norfolk News*:—

“ During the interval between the death and the funeral of Joseph John Gurney, the sensation created by the mournful event which has cast so unprecedented a gloom over the ancient city of Norwich, has continued rather to increase than abate. By realizing their loss, the inhabitants have come to feel so much the more intensely its gravity and its extent. It has furnished the principal topic of conversation in every family, in every private circle, in every group by the way side. Persons of all classes and of every age, however various in opinion on other subjects, have united in their high estimate of the character of the deceased, and in the melancholy satisfaction of recalling excellencies of which now, alas! the memory alone remains. Each individual has had his own story to tell of some public benefit, or of some kindness shown to others or himself; and innumerable acts of beneficence, long forgotten amidst the crowd of more recent instances, have been related and listened to with the

mournful pleasure incident to such a theme. The very street gossip of Norwich during the past week, if it could have been collected and recorded, would doubtless furnish an almost unparalleled tribute to departed worth. In the mean while, the outward manifestations of public grief remained, until the day of the funeral, unchanged. The half closed shops and the darkened windows of the private houses in every part of the city, gave unequivocal testimony to the sorrow which reigned within.

Other demonstrations of affection and esteem were made. On Sunday, the subject was referred to in the pulpit by a large number of the ministers of religion, as well of the established, as of dissenting churches. Several funeral sermons were preached, and, amongst the rest, one by the Bishop, in the Cathedral, where anthems appropriate to the occasion were sung by the choir. It is, we believe, the first time since the days of George Fox, that the death of any one of his followers has elicited so high a tribute of respect from any of the heads of the English hierarchy; nor are we aware that either history or tradition tells us of seven days' civic mourning in the case of any private individual whatever.

The funeral itself, as might have been expected, from these unusual preliminaries, was an extraordinary scene. The morning of Tuesday, the appointed day, was ushered in by the tolling of the bells of the various churches. At an early hour, the few shops that had opened, closed again, and the entire city suspended business, in order to witness, or to take part in, the approaching ceremony. A number of gentlemen, among whom were the Mayor, the ex-Mayor, and the Sheriff, went out in carriages as far as Earlham Hall, the residence of the deceased, about two miles distant from Norwich. Other persons, including a large portion of the scholars of Palace Street British School, walked to the same spot. The procession set out from Earlham at about ten o'clock. It consisted of the hearse, and the carriages containing the relatives, followed by the equipages which had arrived from Norwich, making in all more than fifty, and accompanied by a considerable body of pedestrians. The *cortege* would no doubt have been more numerous, but it was understood to be the wish of Mr. Gurney's family, that no empty carriages should attend. A simplicity, in harmony alike with the practice of the Society of Friends, and

with the habits and character of the departed, marked all the arrangements. As was fitting in such a case, there was no parade, no hired sorrow, no needless *insignia* of grief. There was, however, the pomp of mourning multitudes. As the procession moved on towards the city, it was met by a gradually increasing number of the inhabitants, who had issued forth in a continuous stream to pay their last tribute to the memory of Joseph John Gurney. Silently and sadly they stood while the hearse passed slowly by, and many a tearful countenance, among the crowd, bore witness to their sympathy with the surviving relatives, and their reverential attachment to the dead. At St. Giles' gates, the throng became yet more dense and imposing. Every vacant space was occupied with spectators, and the road sides were like living walls. All, however, appeared to be impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, and with the desire to preserve a becoming order. But for the obvious traces of sorrow everywhere displayed, it might have been imagined that the voice so often heard with delight amongst us, was not yet stilled by death, and that the well known benignant smile and the accustomed eloquence were employed

in marshalling that vast assembly. The departed spirit seemed to resume for the time, its wonted influence over the citizens of Norwich.

At this point a body of Sunday School Teachers, to the number of about two hundred, joined the procession, now greatly swollen by numbers who had already fallen in with the line of carriages, and accompanied it on foot. The passage through the city presented a striking spectacle. The closed shops, the thronged but quiet streets, the windows everywhere filled with persons looking on with mute emotion, the unadorned hearse and its attendants moving slowly through the motionless and crowded ranks, with the accompaniment of numerous church bells tolling at measured intervals, and heard at different and constantly varying distances—all this spoke of a sentiment alike deep, universal, and irrepressible. It was the language of a bereaved community, lamenting the loss, and bearing a last testimony to the virtues of a fellow citizen beloved and honoured in life: still more beloved and honoured now that he is gone.

The procession, welcomed everywhere in the same manner, and continually growing as it

went along, passed through St. Giles' street, the Market place, Exchange street, St. George's Bridge street, and Pitt street, to St. Martin's lane, on its way to the burying ground attached to the Friends' Meeting house in the Gildencroft. Long before it reached this spot, many persons had assembled there, some for the purpose of taking their places near the freshly opened grave, others for the sake of preventing the pressure which, on account of the extraordinary crowd, was to be anticipated. With this view a number of gentlemen formed, and maintained during the whole ceremony, a close double file, sufficiently extended to secure an uninterrupted passage from the entrance of the ground to the place of interment, and from thence to the adjoining meeting house. By this means, by the excellent arrangements of Mr. Yarrington, and still more by the spontaneously quiet and respectful demeanour of the public, the most perfect order was preserved throughout. At about half-past eleven the hearse arrived at the narrow gateway leading to the burying ground, from whence the coffin was borne to the grave by six members of the Society of Friends, followed by the mourners.

After the procession had reached and sur-

rounded the grave, at the mouth of which the coffin was supported, a profound silence ensued, according to the simple but solemnly appropriate practice of the "Friends." This was, at length, broken by Mr. John Hodgkin, who made a brief reference to the 55th, 56th, and 57th verses of the 15th chapter of the 1st of Corinthians. "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!" Another pause took place, followed by an address delivered by Mrs. Lucy Maw, of Needham. The coffin was then lowered. It was an impressive and affecting moment. The circle of mourning relatives, the surrounding crowd of spectators—scarcely less moved or less warmly attached to the deceased—persons of all ranks, of all ages, of all communions, Magistrates and artizans, Clergymen and Dissenting ministers, Churchmen, Independents, Baptists, Methodists, and Friends—in short, representatives of the whole population of Norwich, now took their last farewell of Joseph John Gurney. We shall not desecrate the feelings of that moment by attempting to describe them. It will be

sufficient to say that, after gazing for an instant down into the narrow and final resting place, the procession slowly turned their footsteps towards the meeting-house, where a public religious service was to be held.

This service differed in no respect, but in the numbers who attended, from the usual meeting for worship in the same place. It consisted of the accustomed silence, broken at intervals by the language of unpremeditated prayer and preaching. The first ministers who addressed the dense and attentive assembly were Mrs. Mary Ann Bayes, Mr. Cornelius Hanbury, and Mr. William Ball. Mrs. Gurney, the widow of the deceased, with whom all hearts sympathised, then offered up a prayer full of resignation and thanksgiving. The next speaker was Mr. John Hodgkin. A prayer by Mr. Braithwaite concluded the meeting. The service was deeply impressive, and, pervaded as it was throughout by the spirit of pure Evangelical Catholic Christianity, formed an appropriate conclusion to the funeral of Joseph John Gurney.

Thus terminated the proceedings of a day destined to be memorable in the annals of Norwich; of a day when the simple obsequies of a

private individual were converted into an august public ceremony by the whole body of the citizens, as a memorial of his exalted virtues, and of their irreparable loss."

In concluding this brief and imperfect memoir of one who has occupied so large a space in society, and who has produced such extensive and beneficial influence in the church and the world, the writer indulges the hope that a history of his life, more comprehensive and more worthy of his name, will soon be prepared by some one who possesses the needful information, and who can fully sympathize with his mind and character. In the meanwhile, this little sketch may serve to remind those who knew him, and to inform those who knew him not, of some features of his character, and of some of his abundant labours. May it also be the means of inducing every reader to imitate his example, and to trust with increased confidence and love in that Redeemer, who was all his salvation and all his desire. He is now "dead, and buried, and his sepulchre is with us," but his spirit is still engaged in the service of Christ, and the memorial of his earthly labours shall endure for ever.

“ Si monumentum requiris, CIRCUMSPICE ;”

If you ask for his monument, look around—not, indeed, on sculptured marble, or on splendid architecture, but on works of faith, and labours of love; on ignorance instructed, and captivity released; on poverty supplied with bread, and misery deprived of its sting; on sinners saved, and Christ glorified.

———Monumentum ære perennius,
Regalique situ Pyramidum altius :
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
Annorum series, et fuga temporum.

And yet a monument, on which his own hand would be the first to inscribe, “BY THE GRACE OF GOD, I AM WHAT I AM; AND HIS GRACE WHICH WAS BESTOWED UPON ME WAS NOT IN VAIN; FOR I LABOURED MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN THEY ALL; YET NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH WAS WITH ME.”

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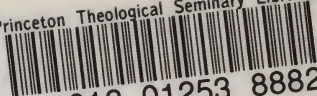
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